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ABSTRACT

The enhancement of the European dimension in the national curriculum is a large scale educational innovation that affects many European countries. This report puts forward the proposition that broad scale educational innovation has more success if the aims and objectives find their way into textbooks. The reasons why a European dimension in education is important are the existence of an international political consensus and the influence of a common market with free trade, commerce, and the free movement of people. The general aim is to provide young people with meaningful opportunities to acquire the knowledge, insights, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate constructively in a changing Europe. Embedding the European dimension into the existing curriculum of educational systems in European countries consists of the selection of textbooks and information supply within the school and exchange programs outside the school for teachers and students. From a 1992 textbook analysis of Dutch geography and history textbooks, the results indicate general conclusions about European issues in history and geography textbooks of which three are highlighted: (1) geography textbooks in general give more attention to the European dimension than history books; (2) the fact that young people can make a contribution to tackling transnational problems hardly occurs in the textbooks analyzed; and (3) the methodological approach to the European dimension needs to be improved through attention to skills that develop an investigative attitude and judgment formation. (CK)

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The quality of textbooks: a basis for European collaboration

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National Institute for Curriculum Development

The quality of textbooks: a basis for European collaboration

Consortium of
Institutions for
Development and Research
in Education in Europe
CIDREE

Paper presented at the Bologna Children's Book Fair "European qualifications for European mobility; Books, Teaching, Language and Curricula" International Meeting Bologna, Italy, Saterday 17th April 1993

Hans Hooghoff

National Institute for
Curriculum Development

Enschede, 1993

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Introduction

The enhancement of the European Dimension in the national curricula is a large scale educational innovation which affects many European countries, especially the EC countries. Following the 1988 resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education a great number of European countries agreed that the European dimension should get a structural place in their educational systems.
UNESCO guidelines (1988/1991) for the evaluation of textbooks and other educational materials in international education recommend that teachers take part in in-service programmes which give them the skills to analyze and evaluate textbooks and other educational resources in the context of their own cultures, and that they develop a checklist from which to evaluate written texts from the viewpoint of internationalism.
In my presentation I will put forward the proposition that broad scale educational innovation has more chance of success if its aims and objectives find their way into textbooks.
I will also argue for the importance of textbook analysis as a strategy to achieve embedding of educational innovation into the curriculum. As the implementation of the European Dimension will serve as an example, I shall first deal with the European dimension as a cross curricular issue.
Eventually I will *briefly* describe the textbook analysis project for the European dimension which is currently carried out in the Netherlands by the Dutch National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO).

Why European Dimension?

The reasons why a European dimension in education is important, can be summarised as follows. First of all, there is an international political consensus on the importance of the European Dimension in education. Although the 1991 Maastricht summit has shown that the process of European unity needs more time than one would have hoped, the influence of the European Community on everyday life in social, cultural, linguistic and economic respects is steadily increasing.
At the level of language use for example 'euro' is used as a prefix in all sorts of combinations. You can pay with your Eurocard or with eurocheques. You can watch the eurosongfestival. You can have a euroroof placed on your house and you can dispose of your garbage in a eurobag. And recently a new eurodictionary has been published.
At the economic and the social levels, the influence of a common market with free trade, commerce and the free movement of people, can be of a direct importance for the pupils' future. National legislation is tested against European legislation. And finally there are the enormous cross border problems, such as the environmental problem which have to be tackled at a European level.
But are young people really prepared to be European citizens? Research (Boersma/ Hooghoff, 1992) has shown that young people are badly informed on European developments. Recent statistics show that not more than 10% of secondary schools in the Netherlands are actively developing an international policy.
If we want the 'euro'-compounds to be meaningful for young people, education has to fulfil an important task, when it comes to developing knowledge and skills necessary for them, to live as effective European citizens.
A broader and more profound knowledge of European items, must lead the pupils to a greater awareness of their European identity, and to a greater involvement in European issues, so that they can function as responsible and critical European citizens.

The European Dimension versus teaching about Europe

The European dimension is not a new school subject. It is a cross curricular theme that has to be given attention to throughout the curriculum, especially in the social subjects and in foreign language teaching. Some of the social subjects have always dealt with Europe at some stage. Europe as a continent has always been a part of the geography curriculum, for instance the climate and the population.
Chronologically speaking European history can be traced back to ancient times. Ancient Greece and Rome, the middle ages, the renaissance, industrial revolution, fascism, post war Europe, just to mention a few European themes that are traditionally dealt with in history lessons. There are enough opportunities to build in the European dimension.
The European dimension, however, is not the same as teaching about Europe.
The general aim of the European dimension is to provide young people with meaningful opportunities to acquire the knowledge, insights, attitudes and skills necessary to participate constructively in a changing Europe.

This will have an effect not so much on the quantity of the information offered, but rather on the way in which the subject matter is presented.
The European dimension promoted through the subject history, for instance, should provide pupils with opportunities to critically investigate, historical events and processes which have contributed, to the concept of modern European civilization.
In the subject geography the same should be done with respect to the distribution of space, resources, activities and cultures throughout Europe.
In foreign language teaching the European dimension could be promoted by depicting a realistic picture of the society in question, by avoiding stereotyping and by developing a positive attitude, towards different accents and manners of speaking.
The essence of the European dimension can therefore be determined in terms of the quality of educational content, and in terms of the learner's behaviour. *Learning to be a responsible European citizen* implies an active role of the pupils.

At the same time, we should stress that our understanding of citizenship does not imply a narrow, exclusivist Eurocentric perspective. On the contrary, learning to be a responsible European citizen, must involve an appreciation and respect for other cultures and societies, both inside and beyond Europe's borders. In breaking down barriers between European countries, we must avoid inadvertently creating new ones around Europe's borders. A good European citizen is a good world citizen.

"Teaching without textbooks is like playing soccer without a ball"

This slightly provocative statement depicts a situation quite recognizable for classroom practice in many countries. Most teachers prefer working with textbooks of a lesser quality, to working without textbooks at all. When we talk about textbooks in this paper, we use the word in a broader sense meaning all kinds of educational materials provided by educational publishers to be used for pedagogical purposes. Textbooks can be accompanied by supplementary materials such as educational software, teachers' manuals and other curriculum materials. Recent research has shown that in the USA 75% to 90 % of instruction time is determined by the programme that is offered in textbooks (Tholey, 1991). Similar figures can be found in the Netherlands. Students spend 80% of their school time with the use of textbooks. In many other European countries the situation is quite similar. For teachers, textbooks offer a choice of subject matter, as well as a pedagogical concept to convey the subject matter. For pupils, they form an important means to handle the subject matter, and to make themselves familiar with it. From these facts,

it is justifiable to conclude that the content of textbooks reflects a national consensus on the knowledge and values that are considered to be important for students to acquire. One can also conclude that the quality of textbooks has an effect on the quality of the learning process.
In those countries where it is less common to use materials from educational publishers teachers will have to select their own materials and determine their own pedagogical concept. When it comes to educational innovation, all teachers, whether they use regular textbooks or other educational source materials, will find themselves in the situation that they want to include the innovative content into their classroom activities. It is therefore important to provide teachers with instruments for the selection and evaluation of their learning materials.

The embedding of the European Dimension into the existing curriculum is a challenge for the educational systems of a great number of European countries. A embedding of a new curricular theme, such as the European dimension can be achieved at different levels.
Within school we think of curriculum development, the selection of textbooks, information supply for teachers.
Outside school we think of exchange programmes for teachers and students.

There are several strategies that can be used to achieve this structural embedding. Just think of
Organizing refresher courses for teachers is one of them, including the European dimension into the examination syllabi is another.
If educational innovation such as the European dimension, however, is supposed to have a substantial impact it has to reach the individual school and everyday school practice, which means that it has to be included into the regular learning materials. That is why we regard *textbook analysis*, as an important strategy to help bring about embedding of the European dimension within the school.

When teaching the European dimension teachers have to make choices. Not everything that has ever been said or written about Europe is relevant for pupils to become responsible European citizens. Nor is it possible in the existing curriculum to deal with Europe extensively. Therefore it can be useful to choose a minimum of core contents and skills relating to the European dimension. The choice of these core contents and skills is the national responsibility of every individual country. The following key themes can serve as a guideline for the core contents:

1. a dynamic concept of Europe as a continent, constantly, changing and developing, as a number of countries cooperating in the economic, social and cultural fields, with common problems and often different interests in all those fields;
2. European collaboration and integration, and the concept of unity and diversity;
3. transnational problems like the environment, migration, human rights, Europe and the Third World;
4. East-West relationships.

The skills necessary for pupils to become active European citizens will be the ones to be developed at a cross-curricular level for the social subjects. Generally speaking, these are problem-posing and problem solving capabilities and the capability of analyzing and evaluating information, in order to come to a critical judgement.

Attitudes and Values that are regularly mentioned as relating to the European Dimension, are autonomy, co-operation, intern dependence, self-respect and respect for others, a commitment to peace and human rights.

Textbook Analysis Project

In 1992 the National Institute for Curriculum Development carried out an analysis of widely used Dutch geography and history textbooks.
In textbook research two approaches can be distinguished, which both have advantages and shortcomings. Quantitative content analysis, which for instance measures the space allocated to a certain topic in a textbook, leads to very objective results, but hardly takes into account the quality of the content. The results therefore are not very meaningful. The qualitative approach explicitly looks at what precisely is being said, about the topic as well as the meaning of the information context. The disadvantage of this approach, however, is the subjectivity of the results. The assessment of the textbook is to a great extent dependent on the interpretation of the researcher. Researchers have tried to combine the strong points of both approaches in the so called structural qualitative approach. The instrument of analysis in this approach consists of two frames of reference which accurately list respectively the *subject content* and the *methodological guidelines* a textbook should follow. The space for subjective interpretations is thus limited. For our analysis we developed such an instrument.

In fact two instruments have been developed:

1. One for the *analysis and assessment and evaluation of subject contents*, the main question being: do textbooks really deal with the contents with a European dimension, such as described in curriculum documents? Two different frames of reference have been developed for geography and history, and could extended to cover other subjects.
2. The second instrument is for the *analysis and evaluation of the methodological approach*, the main question being: Are the textbooks in line with the desirable methodological approach in the classroom?

In the content analysis we looked at the degree of completeness and explicitness with which the content items listed in the frame of reference were to be found in the textbooks.
In the methodological analysis and assessment we followed a different procedure. We translated the core objectives described, in the curriculum into a number of methodological categories, and items which we expected to find in the textbooks. The assessment scores were eventually represented in the so called content profiles and methodological profiles, so that one could see immediately the strong points and the shortcomings of the textbook in question.
For each of the textbooks omissions in the presentation of the subject matter have been listed, and recommendations for improvement have been formulated. The textbook publisher can use the recommendations for a new edition of the textbook. Being aware of the shortcomings of the textbook they use, teachers will know what to do to improve the quality of the European dimension in classroom practice.

The following methodological profile shows the scores of the analyzed geography textbooks.

Methodological profile of the analyzed geography textbooks (Wolfs/Noordink, 1993).

Category, item	A	B	C	D	E
1. **Possibilities to develop interest and involvement in European issues** - the subject matter pays attention to pupils' real life situations - the subject matter pays attention to real life situations of people in Europe - people in Europe tell about their personal situation - the subject matter makes an appeal to the pupils' own responsibility when it comes to tackling transnational problems.	3	3	2	1	2
2. **Variation in the use of media** - alternation of texts, photographs, illustrations, tables, diagrams etc.	1	1	1	1	1
3. **Ethnocentric information and prejudice** - The subject matter does not contain ethnocentric information nor prejudice against peoples and cultures in Europe.	1	1	1	1	1
4. **Variation in tasks and assignments** - subject content with a European dimension offers a well-balanced amount of reproductive and productive assignments - pupils are offered attractive working methods to engage in activities with a European dimension: simple research assignments, assignments aiming at the formation of judgement, forms of discussion, assignments to explore their own surroundings and/or role plays.	3	3	3	1	1

A, B, C, D, E = the five geography textbooks analyzed
The categories are numbered 1. 2. 3. 4.
The items are preceded by -
Scores: 1 = well worked out, 2 = fairly well worked out,
3 = poorly worked out, 4 = not present.

Conclusions

I want to confine myself to a number of general conclusions we found with respect to European issues in history and geography textbooks.

1. Geography textbooks in general give more attention to the European dimension than history textbooks.
2. The fact that young people can make a contribution, when it comes to tackling transnational problems, hardly occurs at all in the textbooks analyzed.
3. Especially the methodological approach to the European dimension needs to be improved. More attention has to be paid to skills which develop an investigative attitude and the formation of opinion and judgement.
   That means more emphasis has to be laid on the application of basic concepts in new contexts rather than the mere reproduction of facts.

The results of this textbook analysis project were published in May 1993 and are going to be discussed with educational publishers. On the basis of this analysis a checklist has been produced which geography and history teachers can use to select new materials and to assess the ones they use.
If we want Europe to mean something to young people, now and in the future, various aspects have to be taught. Pupils have to be provided with opportunities and skills to find their own way into "Europe". Opportunities such as exchange programmes, communication through the computer, skills as gathering information and the knowledge of foreign languages.

I am convinced that there is an enormous amount of knowledge in the field of education in Europe, but that the potential is not sufficiently used for tackling transnational educational issues in a common effort, certainly not with the aim of creating a uniform European curriculum. Quite legitimately, smaller countries make out a case for their own language and culture, but that does not mean that there are no common problems in education which we had better solve in a common effort. This is also our experience in the European Consortium for Development and Research that only exists for rather more than two years, but in which nearly all Western European Countries are represented.

Now is the time for more effective collaboration in the field of education in Europe. That is why I want to argue the desirability of collaboration between the European Educational Publishers Group and the European Consortium for Development and Research (CIDREE) in the field of development of educational materials that can be used in several European countries. After all a certain consensus on core contents on the European cultural history should be possible. The development of a common core and publishing in several languages seems a challenge to me for the next few years, a challenge that we must not avoid. This will be conducive to mobility within European education and to its quality. It could mean a step further in the realisation of unity in diversity.

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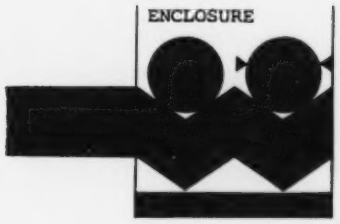

PRESS

Fiera del Libro per Ragazzi

PRESS

European qualifications for European mobility
Books, Teaching, Language and Curricula

International Meeting
Bologna, Saturday 17th April 1993
Palazzo dei Congressi - Sala Bianca

1993 is the very much Europe's year, not simply because it marks the official opening of the member states' markets and social systems, but for reasons that run much deeper: the major geopolitical changes of recent years have raised our awareness of the common roots which lie at the heart of our European cultural heritage. This multi-faceted and rich culture is central to the creation of a great continental «polyphony» and represents the very cornerstone of gradual integration. This is the subject which BolognaFiere has tabled for international debate in order to mark the 30th anniversary of the Children's Book Fair in a fitting manner. The meeting will endeavour to pinpoint areas of convergence in the educational systems of the individual countries and thus foster that process of harmonisation which is essential for the greater mobility of intellectual resources.

P R O G R A M M E

9.00-9.30 a.m.
Welcome and introduction by
Dante Stefani
Chairman, BolognaFiere
Walter Vitali
Mayor of the City of Bologna
Fabio Fabbri
Under-secretary of State to the Council of Ministers
Nino Cristofori
Minister of Labour

9.30-10.00 a.m.:
Address
Rosa Russo Jervolino
Education Minister

10.00-11.30 a.m.
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND INTEGRATION

With:
Winfried Böhm
Würzburg University (Germany)
Ermanna Bombonati
Elemond, Milan (Italy)
Tullio De Mauro
«La Sapienza» University - Rome (Italy)
José Luis García Garrido
Universidad Nacional de Educacion
a Distancia - Madrid (Spain)
Hans Hoogkoff
Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe, CIDREE - Enschede (Holland)
Marc Moingeon
Hachette Education - Paris (France)

11.30 a.m.-1.00 p.m.
CHOICES AND DECISIONS FOR A EUROPE WITHOUT FRONTIERS

Belgium
Elio di Rupo
Education Minister of the French Speaking Community in Belgium
Franz Josef Heinen
Chief Councillor of the «Education Organisation» Sector
Ernst Höhen
Councillor, Ministry of the German-Speaking Community

Greece
Georgios Sonflias
Minister of National Education

Luxembourg
Henri Hostert
Chief Councillor to the Government National Education Ministry

Spain
Pérez Rubalcaba
Minister of Education and Science

Coordinated by
Stefano Rolando and **Clara Abatecola**
Department of Information and Publishing, Council of Ministers

Advisor
Mauro Laeng
«La Sapienza» University - Rome

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